

Corrected Transcript

Interview with **RICHARD MAULSBY**

Interviewed by Tom Sherwood

Richard Maulsby was the founding President of the Gertrude Stein Democratic Club and coordinated the key role that gay organization played in the 1978 Barry campaign. He served as Director of the Office of Motion Picture and Television Development in the Barry Administration from 1979-1984 and held a cabinet position as Director of the Office of Cable Television from 1984-1991. He went on to work at the US Patent and Trademark Office until he retired.

August 17, 2015

[Begin audio file part 1 of 2.]

RICHARD MAULSBY: I'm Richard Maulsby, and I was the founding president of the Gertrude Stein Democratic Club in 1976.

INTERVIEWER: Richard, just so we'll have it, even though it will be on paper, I'm Tom Sherwood and I'm doing the interview. Spell your first and last name, just so we'll have it correctly.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Richard is spelled the traditional way, R-i-c-h-a-r-d, Maulsby is M-a-u-l-s-b as in boy-y.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Again, you'll fill out some of this, but I want to know because actually I'm interested. Who are you and where did you come from? I tell the interns at our TV station to tell me in 30 seconds who they are, where they came from, how they got to Channel 4. I don't expect you to do 30 seconds, but where are you from, how did you end up in Washington? Give me your little back story.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Well, I grew up in a small town, Fairmont, population 730. It's in the southeast part of Nebraska, Fairmont, Nebraska, 60 miles west of Lincoln. I went to the University of Nebraska and I majored in radio and television, speech, and I worked at the University of Nebraska radio station and then at three different radio stations in Lincoln while I was in school, as an undergraduate.

INTERVIEWER: A reporter? An on-air announcer?

RICHARD MAULSBY: I was on-air. I was a disc jockey. I did three formats. I did rock and roll, you know, top 40, I did middle of the road, and I did a semi-classical station. At the semi-classical station I had a morning show, where I did interviews with people.

INTERVIEWER: What year for these?

RICHARD MAULSBY: That was 1961 to 1966. In '66, I went to Buffalo, New York, to go to graduate school at the State University of New York at Buffalo. There I did a university radio program with Henry Tenenbaum [reporter for WUSA TV in the 1970s-early 1980s and hosted PM Washington during those years], who, of course, worked in the market here. At that time he was calling himself Henry Lawrence, and Henry and I did a weekly show that was distributed

throughout the state of New York, to try to put a positive image about the State University of New York at Buffalo, at a time in the '60s when there was a lot of unrest and so on.

This guy we worked for would make up these little things that rhymed, that started the show. The one we always laughed about, when I would see him later was Judy Collins [Prominent folk singer in 1960s], we did an interview with her. It went something like, "Alliteration, amplification, and a folk star's justification."

INTERVIEWER: And what did you study there?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Mass communications and mass media, and that's where I got my master's degree. And then I went to work at WGR, TV 2 in Buffalo.

INTERVIEWER: WGR?

RICHARD MAULSBY: TV 2 in Buffalo. It was a Taft broadcasting station.

INTERVIEWER: What does that mean?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Taft as in Taft Family, yeah. I don't know whether they exist anymore but they owned a lot of stations.

INTERVIEWER: They may have sold out.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah. And then, on the side—and they didn't even know this at the television station—I worked at an FM, middle-of-the-road station in Buffalo, at the same time. So, yeah, I was there for about a year and I wanted to work in a larger market so I started applying around, and it came down to KDKA-TV in Pittsburgh, which was a Westinghouse. I don't know, again, whether Westinghouse still owns it or not, but KDKA radio is the oldest radio station in the country.

So, I mean, I went to New York and was interviewed there first, and then I went to Pittsburgh. At the same time I interviewed here in Washington, at what was then WMAL. And I had been turned down. I thought the interview had gone well here, and I really wanted to come here because I was always interested in politics, and it was the nation's capital and all of that, and it would have been a bigger market too. And I was on my way, actually, for one final interview in Pittsburgh, and I definitely was going to be offered the job there.

INTERVIEWER: What year was that?

RICHARD MAULSBY: That would be 1969. And I was on my way out of the apartment to catch a flight and the phone rang, and it was WMAL calling and saying they had reconsidered, and they offered me the job. So I came here.

INTERVIEWER: And what was the job?

RICHARD MAULSBY: I was the Assistant Promotion and Advertising Manager.

INTERVIEWER: So you were there when the Joy Boys were there?

RICHARD MAULSBY: No. That's WRC.

INTERVIEWER: No. Weren't they at WMAL?

RICHARD MAULSBY: No, no. You're talking about Harden and Weaver [they hosted a top-rated morning drive time show on WMAL Radio].

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Harden and Weaver. The Joy Boys of Radio that was Willard Scott and Ed Walker and—

INTERVIEWER: Was that WRC?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah. That was WRC. That was Willard Scott and Ed Walker

INTERVIEWER: Right. We are the Joy Boys.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Right. And, of course, the other person that I knew at WMAL, because he came at the same time, was John Lyon. John was the sweetest guy, and he had a kid's show and played a guitar and stuff like that.

INTERVIEWER: But Harden and Weaver were the—

RICHARD MAULSBY: Harden and Weaver. They were big. At that time, WMAL, and then Tom Gauger {hosted the 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. time slot on WMAL Radio in the 1970s and 1980s} also came at the same time I did.

INTERVIEWER: '69.

RICHARD MAULSBY: '69, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Where did you first live?

RICHARD MAULSBY: I lived on 27th Street, up by the zoo, 27th Street up by the zoo, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: And WMAL—

RICHARD MAULSBY: —was on Connecticut Avenue at that time, 4400 block of Connecticut Avenue. It had been a bowling alley. And, of course it was number three in the market. ABC was very weak at that time, owned by the *Evening Star* [newspaper], very cheap and poorly managed. And then, right after I got there, two things happened. The guy who hired me got fired, and their license was challenged by the Black United Front.

So it turned out to be a bad decision—ultimately a good decision, but in terms of a professional point of view. They clearly were going to make me the number one person in Pittsburgh. It was a chain. Obviously, Westinghouse, they did the *Mike Douglas Show*, they did a lot. So probably professionally it would have been better to do Pittsburgh at that time, but in the end this worked out because, you know, as I look back and think about it, the reason I really wanted to come to Washington and this market was because I was interested in news and politics, and this really was the place to be for that.

INTERVIEWER: And when you were there, in the late 1960s—how long were you there?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Let's see. I came here in August, on August 25th of 1969. I always remember the next day, the next night my boss took me to dinner with Larry Laurent, who was the very pompous former TV critic of the *Post*, and he regaled us with his stories of just being out in California, and what was in the Golden Parrot [restaurant], which is now the Scientology building. And I always think about that when I eat at La Tomate [restaurant], which is right across the street.

INTERVIEWER: You were there for how many years?

RICHARD MAULSBY: I was there for a year, and it was just one of those disasters. You know, those things happen. So when I left there I was unemployed for a period of time.

INTERVIEWER: So what did you do when you were unemployed?

RICHARD MAULSBY: I did nothing but look for a job, yeah. I mean, it was about 6 months. I had applied at other places and had an offer from—actually, NBC owned the affiliate in Cleveland. But I didn't want to go to Cleveland. I really had gotten to like the city, this area. I'd gotten to know people. I really had sort of come out as being gay here for the first time. So I ended up working in radio and television and film production for a number of organizations, and I did freelance work. I eventually ended up at the American Red Cross, actually, and they had a big Audio Visual production unit and I worked with them.

INTERVIEWER: That was a time of turmoil. That was the Vietnam War demonstrations, and, of course, the ongoing civil rights issues.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Right.

INTERVIEWER: Were you nationally oriented, or when did you start paying attention to local—LGBT [lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender] issues, or—

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah. You know, because we didn't have home rule until '74, I first remember hearing about Marion Barry when he was on the school board. I got involved in gay activism, gay politics in '71, in the Frank Kameny campaign. I had a good friend—

INTERVIEWER: Frank Kameny—campaign for what?

RICHARD MAULSBY: For the nonvoting delegate. That was really the first election that we had—

INTERVIEWER: The one Walter Fauntleroy won.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Right.

INTERVIEWER: And Frank Kameny, of course, for people who want to look him or google him, he was a famous gay rights pioneer.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Right. And we didn't even say he was gay. What did we call it? My friend, Paul Kuntzler will remember this, because he really managed the campaign. I was sort of the media guy. But it was the freedom of choice, something or the other. You know, there were all these people that ran. Frank ended up doing rather well. He sort of finished at the top of the second division, and I remember we had three newspapers at that time, and the *Daily News* said while he may not have proved gay was good, he proved it's not so bad after all, or something like that.

But what was very important about that campaign was that it brought people, like myself, and others into the political process and that's how I met Paul Kuntzler, and, of course, Paul and I are the co-founders of the Gertrude Stein Democratic Club.

INTERVIEWER: Was that formed here? I mean, that club, it's not an offshoot of some other organization?

RICHARD MAULSBY: No. The Gertrude Stein Democratic Club—we're here in Southwest D.C.—was formed just a couple of blocks from here, at Paul Kuntzler and his partner, Steve Miller's

townhouse, over on G Street, 3rd and G Street, S.W. Paul and I had worked on a couple of other things, like in '74 and '72, that were more nationally oriented towards the McGovern campaign.

INTERVIEWER: McGovern, who carried the district and—did he carry Massachusetts?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Massachusetts.

INTERVIEWER: Just two places.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah. The next thing that happened was the commencement of home rule, in 1974. I, always being interested in politics, and Paul and I used to speak derisively of the Gay Activist Alliance, people that were these purists, you know, and the activists, and I was more about the practicality of politics, and also that politics should be fun. So that was the idea of having a club.

Now, at that time, the only other club in America, Democratic Club in America, was the Alice B. Toklas Club in San Francisco, and Paul and I both had met the leaders of that organization. And so with the advent of home rule, with the political environment here really heating up, and obviously we having an agenda that was important to us, we decided we needed to have a political organization. It was all fine, well, and good for GAA, the Gay Activist Alliance, to demonstrate and lobby and so forth. But at the end of the day, as I always said, all politicians respect three things: money, organization, volunteers, and those who can identify and get their vote out. And that was really our guiding principle. That's what the Gertrude Stein Democratic Club was going to do. First of all, in the City Council reelection campaign at that time, and then looking towards 1978.

INTERVIEWER: Now, '74 was the first one.

RICHARD MAULSBY: The first one.

INTERVIEWER: They would ask Congress in '73, and in the first elections Mayor Washington was the appointed mayor and he was the candidate for mayor.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Right.

INTERVIEWER: What races were you involved in?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Well, first of all, the first thing that I did politically was I got up at a forum in August of 1974, when Walter Washington was running against—who was the guy who was Secretary of Army under Carter? It will come to us.

INTERVIEWER: This is when you want to pause the tape but can't.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Right. Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Alexander?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah. Cliff Alexander.

INTERVIEWER: The brains are working.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Right. So I got up and Kuntzler, of course, pushed me to do this, and then he was out of town so it was just me. I get up and I say, "I am a homosexual. Do you support repeal of the sodomy law?" I always thought that Walter Washington maybe had never heard

that word said in public before. He sort of stammered, "Uh, you mean, uh, sodomy?" or something like that. And Alexander, who was very dynamic—I mean, he got up and I was very impressed, pacing back and forth, no notes or anything like that. Of course, right away he said, "Oh, absolutely." So that was sort of my initiation in '74.

But, of course, in '76 what happened was there were people on the Council, including Marion Barry, that drew the short straw, so they would have to run for reelection, as did John Wilson [councilmember from Ward 2]. Now, Paul Kuntzler, the first time in '74, when John was elected—

INTERVIEWER: Before you go to '76—in '74, did you support a candidate?

RICHARD MAULSBY: I just voted.

INTERVIEWER: You didn't support a Council candidate?

RICHARD MAULSBY: No, we did not have an organization. I don't know whether the Gay Activist Alliance at that time did.

INTERVIEWER: But you personally—

RICHARD MAULSBY: Personally, no. I can tell you—I'm not even sure whether I voted for Marion Barry. I probably did. I remember the person—I lived in Ward 3 at that time, out on Nevada Avenue, and the person that really impressed me was Del Lewis.

INTERVIEWER: Del Lewis, the telephone executive.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah, and our ambassador to South Africa under Clinton. I know I voted for him. I probably voted for Marion because I knew he, when on the school board, had supported anti-discrimination against gay folks.

INTERVIEWER: How did you know that?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Because it was in the news. I mean, they made a big deal about it. I mean, Marion, from the very beginning, was the only person who was really willing to step forward and take a stand.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, that was his campaign.

RICHARD MAULSBY: His campaign, but it's true, he did. Now, John Wilson was supportive too, you know, but two things about John, who I dearly loved, was, first of all, he ran in the one ward in the city where we knew we had gay folks, and he had a relationship with Paul Kuntzler and other people from our community. But secondly, at that time he did not have city-wide ambitions like Marion did.

INTERVIEWER: John Wilson was a Ward 2 councilman.

RICHARD MAULSBY: He was a Ward 2 councilman. He drew the short straw too, like Marion, [to determine which of the original members of the first elected City Council would get a year terms] and in '76, that short straw election, Stein had been organized in January, so that's when we had our first endorsements, and that's when I would've first met Marion too.

INTERVIEWER: Did you call the candidates before you at the time, or how did you just discuss them? Did you call Barry or any of the other candidates before—do you remember doing the endorsement interviews?

RICHARD MAULSBY: We didn't do that. You know, I was always a bit of a Leninist about the Gertrude Stein Club.

INTERVIEWER: What does a Leninist mean for a young person who might be listening to this now?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yes. It's a small group of people. Get me that and we'll make change. {Leninist describes Lenin's philosophy regarding revolution and making change he felt you just needed a small group of dedicated people and he implemented that philosophy during the Bolshevik Communist takeover of Russia in 1917}

So at that time I think it was clear who our supporters were, and we wanted to show them, because keep in mind what the underlying principle of Stein was—identify your vote, get them out, give them volunteers, give them money, and make a big deal out of it. [That was the underlying principle of Stein]. And so we knew that we were going to endorse John Wilson and we were going to endorse Marion Barry. I am not sure that we endorsed anybody else in '76.

INTERVIEWER: How big was your organization? Most people were still not out much by then. That was still an ongoing—

RICHARD MAULSBY: How big was our organization?

INTERVIEWER: Was it Leninesque?

[Laughter.]

RICHARD MAULSBY: No. It was more than Leninesque, but I did tend to inflate numbers.

INTERVIEWER: Well, every organization is basically one or two people who are active in it, and others might be members.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah. I would say probably Gertrude Stein had a paying membership—it was only \$25—of maybe 25 people to start. There were six of us who formally organized it, and we met at the Way Off Broadway Theater over by the Lost & Found [night club?] on Monday nights, because it was dark at night. My whole thing was it should be like a club. We should be able to drink and have a little social thing in addition to doing political business.

So I think that we probably did a formal vote, motion kind of thing, but there was no interviewing. We didn't bother with any of the other people on the City Council.

INTERVIEWER: You wanted to know whether they supported gay matters?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah. It was more a matter of where they—and the people at that time who had any kind of record with us were Marion, because of what he had done on the School Board, and John Wilson, who represented the part of the city that had the most gay folks.

INTERVIEWER: That gives us a good feel back to then, but we're talking about the 1978 campaign, when Marion Barry, the councilmember was at large, ran for mayor. So when did you first have more than passing interaction with Marion Barry, and how did that happen?

RICHARD MAULSBY: It happened as a result of the '76 campaign, when we endorsed him, we gave him money, I personally gave him money. I had a handwritten note from him, thanking me, saying "we're building for the future," and I made the mistake of when I went over to interview with him for his book that he wrote, of taking that and a number of other things, and I never got them back.

But in his book, he talks, "Well, I wasn't sure I was going to run." Bullshit. It was clear he was always going to run. That's the whole thing he was doing, you know. And when he said "we're building for the future"—so that is when—

INTERVIEWER: I'm just occasionally looking at the tape.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Do you think maybe we should stop it and make sure it's recording? It's got to be recording.

INTERVIEWER: Well, we can—

RICHARD MAULSBY: We're 20 minutes in.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Why don't we stop just to see if it's recording.

[Begin audio file part 2 of 2.]

RICHARD MAULSBY: All right. We're back on.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. We're back on, and we think we're recording. We hope we are.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Right. Incidentally, the clock restarts itself.

INTERVIEWER: Oh, it does? Okay. So segment number two.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Right.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. You made a reference to Marion Barry's book that he wrote. It took a long time to write, in the last year of his [life, before his] death, when it came out, and he said he was reluctant to run for mayor in 1978. You just said that that was bullshit.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Was that just typical modesty of politicians trying to—

RICHARD MAULSBY: I think so. I mean, he seemed to still be, well, there's a demand for me, or whatever. But it was clear he was very ambitious, and, of course, he and Ivanhoe [Donaldson Barry's campaign manager in 1978 and top aide]—it was clear to me, from the '76 campaign, the whole purpose of that was to get as many votes as you possibly can, running citywide, and began to use that to build support and a network of people, and a lot of people, I think, who came into that campaign, besides us, at that time, it was with '76. I kind of think that some other people, like, for example, Betty King, [1978 Campaign staff member] I would think that started in '76.

INTERVIEWER: And there was no time when Marion Barry, at the time, as he gathered these various people in interest from around the city said, "We're going to run for mayor in 1978?" Not early on, at least?

RICHARD MAULSBY: No.

INTERVIEWER: No real time?

RICHARD MAULSBY: No.

INTERVIEWER: If the sun comes up, you don't have to report the sun comes up, you know. It's something that happens.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Right.

INTERVIEWER: Harry Jaffe and I reported in [our book] *Dream City* that Ivanhoe and Barry recognized that there was no strong leadership in the city, and that they thought they could apply what they had learned in the Civil Rights Movement to municipal government in the city, because it was a brand new field. Were we right?

RICHARD MAULSBY: I think so. I think that was one of the brilliant parts of the campaign. I'll get into this more later, in terms of why the campaign was a success, but I think that is precisely it—taking what they had learned in the Civil Rights Movement and applying it to the campaign. And you know, certainly from our perspective, there wasn't anybody else. I mean, [incumbent Mayor] Walter Washington was Walter Washington. Sterling [Tucker, Chairman of the City Council], you know, was all of this stuff kind of behind the scenes, and I can remember Sterling Tucker slinking into a Gay Pride Day event when it was down at the Lambda Rising [book store] on R Street, like six o'clock after everybody had left. But Marion was there in the middle of the whole thing, giving a speech, rousing people up, working the audience. I mean, there just wasn't anybody like him on the City Council, and certainly nobody who had city-wide ambitions. I mean, that's what was extraordinary about him.

INTERVIEWER: So personally, when you got to know, when did you get to know him more than just being a politician who favored and supported the things that you were supporting? When did you have more of a personal relationship so you could call him Marion and he would call you Richard, or what did he call you?

RICHARD MAULSBY: He called me Richard. You know, I guess I called him Marion. You know, that's interesting to say that. I don't think—I mean I wouldn't say I had a strong personal relationship with him. It was a very good political relationship, certainly very friendly, and obviously I worked for him in his administration. In terms of personal interactions with him, oh, he came out to the house on Nevada Avenue in '78.

INTERVIEWER: During the campaign?

RICHARD MAULSBY: During the campaign, yeah, but not somebody that I socialized with. I did look back, though. There was something. I did see a handwritten note from Effi Barry [Marion's third wife]. It had been my 40th birthday or something and she couldn't come, and she said, "Oh, we want to have you for dinner." Well, you know, that dinner never happened.

INTERVIEWER: Well you know there was talk of Marion Barry, and we said, again—and I don't want to keep mentioning my book—that Barry decided he could not be a single man running for mayor. He had to be married and he had a relationship with Effi, because he had had many relationships, as you well know. Did you know anything about that?

RICHARD MAULSBY: No. I always thought it was a little calculating, in a way, to have a glamorous wife. I certainly had more of a personal relationship with her over the years than I did with Marion, certainly, again, very friendly and cordial, but I can't say we were buds.

INTERVIEWER: Barry presented an image of being kind of a street, rough guy, tough guy, but a lot of the establishment people in the African American community thought he was kind of a "bama" [derogatory slang for Alabama, or a low class black] and that he was just bogarting his way into city politics, where he didn't belong.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Really? Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: You didn't experience that within the black community?

RICHARD MAULSBY: No.

INTERVIEWER: So you were infatuated with him as a politician?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Well, no. I mean, I was. I always wanted somebody, you know, like John F. Kennedy. I was Kennedy's youth coordinator in Fillmore County, Nebraska. So just that youth, that vigor. He was so clearly different, and he wanted to get things done, tired of the mumbling and the bumbling, and so on and so forth. And I think that's why a lot of people, liberals, like liberals, the Georgetown crowd, they got that, that he was different. He was definitely different from those he was running against.

And, you know, it's interesting. I do remember, during the '78 campaign, that Paul and I took Marion to lunch at the Two Continents in the old Washington Hotel, and we sat there in the middle of the room, the three of us, and we're talking about how can we support some of the ideas we had, things we were going to do to mobilize the business community and the gay business community. The Bruce Brothers who owned the Eagle [a popular gay bar and restaurant], they did a \$100-a-plate dinner for them, and the folks who owned the Lost & Found and Pier 9 [very popular bars and discos in the 1970s-80s], you know, we got. But anyway, there were all these people that kept coming up to him, that looked to me to be establishment types.

INTERVIEWER: Board of Trade types?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Board of Trade types, yeah. But, yeah, that's interesting how that whole thing did evolve, that the African American community here did not. Well, he was an outsider. I mean, this is 16th Street. It's the Sharon Pratt [served one term as Mayor, 1991-5] and Arrington [Dixon, former Ward 4 city councilman] and those people that come from—

INTERVIEWER: So what would be your roll in the campaign? Was it your organization's role? Did you get to a point where you could talk to him and fairly understand what the goal of the campaign was?

RICHARD MAULSBY: No. I tell you, I interacted more with Betty King and with Ivanhoe.

INTERVIEWER: People can find out more about Ivanhoe Donaldson, but who was Ivanhoe Donaldson as it related to the '78 campaign?

RICHARD MAULSBY: He was the campaign manager.

INTERVIEWER: That's the title, but some campaign managers just make sure everybody gets paid.

RICHARD MAULSBY: No. I mean, he was the brilliant strategist behind everything. I mean, he and Marion were like this, and they made a brilliant duo, and obviously it started in SNCC [the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee]. I mean, Ivanhoe—I have met very few people in my life that I admire more and really liked more. Yeah, that personal stuff with Ivanhoe—we had a rapport. We've gone to baseball games together, had dinner together, talk on the phone, and so on. I just had a real rapport with him.

INTERVIEWER: What did he do for Marion Barry, based on what Barry's personality was like.

RICHARD MAULSBY: He could keep him focused. He was the person saying, "Hey, Marion, you need to do this," and he would call him Mar and Marion, none of this Councilman or Mr. Mayor or all that kind of stuff. "You need to da-da-da," you know. It's important to have somebody who talks truth to power, and Ivanhoe was the person that could do that and nobody else could do that. Unfortunately, when Ivanhoe had his fall from grace, in my view that's when things really started to—

INTERVIEWER: Everyone knows about the infamous Vista Hotel scene when Barry was arrested in the sting for drugs. Everyone knows, from the 1980s on there were rumors about Barry's use of drugs and womanizing, all those things. Oddly enough, Marion Barry admits to a lot of it in his book, which was kind of surprising to some of us who had tried to prove it for so long. But the '60s and the '70s were big drug times. Do you recall incidents where people, in the campaign, Ivanhoe smoked dope together? I mean, I'll ask it and maybe don't answer that, but where was the world of drugs in the realm Barry did, as far as you know?

RICHARD MAULSBY: I'm not sure, other than marijuana. You know, I never was much into marijuana or any of that kind of stuff. I do know that John Wilson smoked dope around people in the community, Deacon Maccubbin, [owner of the gay book store Lambda Rising, prominent gay activist, founder of "Gay Pride Day" in DC] for example, and I know from Paul—Paul [Kuntzler] was in a circle of people, many of whom lived in Southwest D.C., who would get together and smoke.

You know, I didn't have that—

INTERVIEWER: It's not your scene.

RICHARD MAULSBY: It's not my scene and I don't know, thinking about that in terms of Marion. But like anybody else in the '60s and '70s, I mean, you know, for starters. Now what happened after that—

But I guess I'd like to get back to what Gertrude Stein did, because I think that's as important—

INTERVIEWER: All right. Good.

RICHARD MAULSBY: —in terms of this campaign.

INTERVIEWER: Just give me some dates as you go along so I know where you are.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Let me say, first of all, Paul Kuntzler was a brilliant strategist. He really was into the national thing, what we could do nationally. He was certainly interested in what

was going on locally. But kind of the way we divided things up was it was decided that I would be the Marion Barry person, that this was somebody whose horse we wanted to ride, that clearly we had somebody here who was interested in us, who was going to be supportive of us.

INTERVIEWER: And you were a registered political organization in town.

RICHARD MAULSBY: No.

INTERVIEWER: You weren't registered?

RICHARD MAULSBY: I didn't know you had to register. I'm sure we broke all kinds of laws. At that time, we had those laws? I don't know. We were just the Gertrude Stein Democratic Club and we endorsed people, and gave them money, and worked in their campaigns and so on.

But this was the first campaign where—you know, the theory was, as I said, the gay community needs a political organization, GAA [Gay Activist Alliance] does a great job, they've got good relationships on the Council, you know, and they're moving our agenda forward there, but, you know, at the end of the day you've got to give somebody something in return, and that's what we would do. That would be our sole purpose.

INTERVIEWER: To support candidates who supported you.

RICHARD MAULSBY: to support candidates who supported us, and show, in terms of what we could deliver, it would make them even more receptive to what we needed in the future.

INTERVIEWER: What did you want?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Well, gosh, you know, at that time we didn't have anti-discrimination, what became Title 34. We didn't have that. We did have the thing, in terms of the school. Sodomy repeal eventually took place as part of an overall change of the criminal code. And then, of course, eventually we moved towards—

INTERVIEWER: Was the human rights law done? When was the human rights law?

RICHARD MAULSBY: That's Title 34. They added sexual orientation to the existing. And, you know, we wanted somebody on the Human Rights Commission, and, in fact, [Mayor] Walter Washington appointed Frank Kameny to that. He was the first openly gay person to serve on the commission.

So I decided that we should become the New Hampshire of D.C. politics, and we should endorse, in January. So in January of '78 [correction, the endorsement meeting was in February] —and we had been in existence about 2 years at that point—we had an endorsement meeting over at the Congregational Church at 10th and G Street, I believe it is, and Marion wasn't there. The only person that showed up was John Ray, and he spoke, and then we had a vote, and I announced that the vote was 90 to 1, and we presented Anita Bonds, who was there, with a check for \$1,000, and that picture appeared in the *Blade* [the gay newspaper], and essentially announced our presence in the politics of the District of Columbia.

You know, certainly I'm sure we got something from Marion. In my recollection, Marion never came to the Gertrude Stein Democratic Club and thanked us for our support. It was communicated to us. Anita was sort of the designated person. And then when we started to organize things during the campaign, fundraise, obviously he came to those. We had meetings

for him with the business community, because that was one of the things. We had to go beyond your typical garden variety activist. We had to get, you know, people that were more establishment involved in this, we felt, and we were successful in doing that.

INTERVIEWER: And then you had to argue that Barry was on the Council. Still he had not had executive leadership except, I guess, even in the Civil Rights Movement.

RICHARD MAULSBY: He had Pride [a program to train and employ youths which he ran].

INTERVIEWER: In the Pride, which had some success but some controversy. When you tried to say, "We need to support Barry, he sort of supports LGBT issues"—well, they weren't called that at the time—

RICHARD MAULSBY: Just the gay issues, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: —it was just gay issues at the time, some of the reporting about Barry even then was, well, is he ready? Is he too ambitious? Has he achieved enough? I mean, how did you pitch him?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Well, we didn't have to do that. I mean, it was not a hard sell. I mean, he was it. There was nobody else supporting us that openly. The other issues, really, that never resonated with the gay community.

INTERVIEWER: So your role really was gay activism, and Barry was one of the candidates you supported because of that. I mean, it wasn't that you went to Barry—I'm just trying—your motive here was the—

RICHARD MAULSBY: Pure and simple.

INTERVIEWER: —Gertrude Stein Club—

RICHARD MAULSBY: Right.

INTERVIEWER: —for gay issues.

RICHARD MAULSBY: The underlying principle was you do for those who do for you. He had done for us like nobody else had done. There wasn't anybody other than, again, John Wilson. But there was no comparison with him and Sterling Tucker and Walter Washington.

INTERVIEWER: Can you articulate why he was that way, I mean, why he was supportive of the issues?

RICHARD MAULSBY: I talked more with Ivanhoe about this, I think. No, we did talk some about it. He clearly got it in terms of our movement and the Civil Rights Movement. He, early on, understood that, on a basic discriminatory kind of basis. I really do think he did. You know, it wasn't calculated, because, you know, who knew what's this going to get for me? It's the right thing to do. I can remember Marion saying that one time, "We're going to do what's right for a change." I really felt it was more a matter of principle, quite frankly.

And we demonstrated that it was something—not only the right thing to do but you will benefit if you do it.

INTERVIEWER: All right. So you're supporting this at-large councilmember. Before the '78 campaign you remember he was shot, superficially wounded, the Hanafi [muslim] takeover [of

the District Building] in 1977, and that was a time Barry was the most public about "I'm going to run."

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me about the Hanafi takeover.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Well, I remember it very well. It was a warm day, and for whatever reason, I had to go downtown. I was working out in Virginia at that time and I can remember getting off the bus near the District Building, shortly before it happened or after it happened. I mean, that was scary, the whole thing, and of course at the time I thought it was—you said superficial—I thought it was a little more serious than that.

I forget who it was. Somebody said, "Well, you know, we're wondering what impact will this have if he runs." Somehow he's a martyr.

INTERVIEWER: Well, it does make a difference. I mean, even to this day, right now as horrific as Joe Biden's son dying of brain cancer is, people are saying, "Oh, he's very sympathetic now. He should be running for President." It is a factor in campaigns—

RICHARD MAULSBY: Oh yeah, sure it is, yeah, and it turned out to be a good career move for [Ike] Fullwood, I think. He was the one who carried him out.

INTERVIEWER: Right. That's true. He became the police chief under Barry, at least one of them.

RICHARD MAULSBY: One of them, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: So the '78 campaign—I can't remember when Barry filed to run, but when were you first told, the Gertrude organization or you personally was told, or Paul was told, "I'm running for mayor. I want you guys with me"? Do you have a moment when that was just done? Were you called to a group meeting with Anita Bonds? Did she just call you on the phone?

RICHARD MAULSBY: No. We certainly had communicated what our plans were, and we had had discussions in '77 about what we were going to do. It was very clear that we were going to support him. You know, my recollection was he had already announced by the time we—

INTERVIEWER: The January of '78 endorsement.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah. Yeah, because I can remember going, shortly thereafter, because that was the first time I met Effi Barry. Paul and I both were involved in Greater Washington ADA [Americans for Democratic Action], and talk about purists and all that. But anyway, we went to some small meeting with him in Ward 3, Upper Northwest, and I know it was definitely—it was February, so it was shortly after he had met her, maybe shortly after they'd gotten married. So I think his intent to run was—I don't believe we would have endorsed him before he actually had indicated he was going to run. But those communications we'd had, it was nothing like—I never recall going to a meeting. I had conversations, my first phone conversations with Betty King around that time, I talked with Anita Bonds a lot, some communication with Ivanhoe, although more of that occurred later on in the campaign.

INTERVIEWER: Some leaders are held up by the people around them, and some leaders lead the people around them. Which one was Barry? Did he tell Betty King what to do? Did he tell Ivanhoe what to do? Did he tell Anita what to do? You were tell me with Ivanhoe, earlier, Ivanhoe could talk back to him, and could focus him, because he wasn't, let's face it, the most focused guy in the world. He had good ideas and good presence. So was Betty King like Ivanhoe? Could she say to the campaign, "Well, Marion, you've just got to do this?" or Anita, much more soft tone, would say, "Well, Marion, you really need to do this." Were those the key people around Barry who made Marion Barry that year, 1978? Or was he just stood out and they supported him?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah. I think that they came to it like I did. You know, we were liberal progressives. We liked the idea of this dynamic African American man who was going to get things done, and would bring a new sense of energy to things. I think that's what we all got into. I think Betty certainly would have strong opinions, and would express those, but she would not go over the line. I don't believe that Betty would ever, in a meeting, call him anything but Mr. Mayor.

I found, though, that he would want to know, "What do you suggest? What do you recommend? What should we do?" and we'd talk it over. I mean, that was true in terms of—like the lunch Paul Kuntzler and I had. We talked about various things we wanted to do to try to expand the support of the gay community.

INTERVIEWER: Did you call that lunch. You invited him to lunch?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah, we did, yeah. We invited him to lunch.

INTERVIEWER: And he walked over from the District Building.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah, yeah. So we talked about things. He got our ideas. He suggested things, other things that we might do. It was very, very collaborative. But my sense of it was it was a very smaller kind of group. It was Ivanhoe, maybe Courtland, people that were the SNCC folks—

INTERVIEWER: Courtland Cox, yeah.

RICHARD MAULSBY: —that, you know—Courtland—that were planning strategy and stuff.

You know, I don't know. I was not in any of those. I wasn't in any of those kind of—

INTERVIEWER: So he was basically supporting the earliest demands for some of the most simple rights for gay people. I think this is outside the purview of the thing, but I think it's important to note. I'm going to just jump ahead to the end where Marion Barry as a councilmember voted against same-sex marriage. And knowing all that he had done in the gay community, what was your thought about that?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Well, I was very disappointed, and I told Ivanhoe that I wanted to talk with him before the vote. And Ivanhoe tried to get him to talk with me and he would not. When I went over to his office in Anacostia and interviewed for his book, at the end I said, "You know, Marion, some people evolve on marriage equality; some regress. You have regressed." He said, "Oh, you know, I know that. I feel badly about that. I would like to do something to make up for that," and of course—

INTERVIEWER: No one I know, philosophically, who knows Barry thinks he did it because he disagreed with same-sex marriage, but he depended upon too many African American ministers to help him—food, organizationally—

RICHARD MAULSBY: Is that right? It could be.

INTERVIEWER: —community stuff, and he just—they were dead set against it, but I don't know. Is there any indication why he did it? It was so against everything Marion Barry had ever done in his life. I couldn't think—I cannot—having covered him, I cannot think of anything—

RICHARD MAULSBY: I know. Especially when you look where he came from, at a time when nobody—nobody was supporting us, who had something to lose by doing it, for Christ sakes.

Well, Ivanhoe and I talked about this at the time. He said, "Well, Richard, it's not the same Marion that we knew. When I first knew him, he was a Unitarian, and they barely acknowledge the existence of God. And suddenly, he becomes, you know"—but that's an interesting perspective. I had not heard that before, but that could well be because obviously he was a person who had fallen on hard times.

But, I mean, just from a personal perspective, it was a very personal exchange we had, and then, of course, it was—I think it was after that, we had the gathering for Richard Lefante and I when we celebrate our marriage, and he came late to that. It was very, very touching, I thought. It was the last time I saw him.

So I give him a pass on it, you know. I really do.

INTERVIEWER: It wasn't like he killed it.

RICHARD MAULSBY: No. It's kind of, more or less—well, they got the votes, anyway, you know, so what the hell. Yeah.

But I want to—if I can, let's go back to the campaign. Here's what we did. Started off with a thousand dollars. We organized other people in the community to give money, do fundraisers, and then most importantly, our calling card of fame—and Marion credited us with this, I think, in his book. I don't know. But we basically ran the phone bank, and the way—

INTERVIEWER: We the [?].

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah. You know, interesting the way this came down is that—it must have been June or something. I said, "You know, Paul"—I said, you know—and I was very—frankly, everybody—I think Marion is the only candidate I've ever supported in my life who's won. If you run for office and you see me, go run the other way. But I have all these magnificent failures, George McGovern, whoever.

And I said, "Well, I think we really got to do something in terms of the campaign. So I then started getting on the phone, and I made sure every night during that long hot summer that we made sure that they had the phone bank staffed up.

INTERVIEWER: The primary was in September. So where was the phone bank?

RICHARD MAULSBY: It was down at the headquarters, which was in that old retail core there. I want to say it was on G street. Did it used to be a fabric shop or something? One of the smaller

shops along G Street. That's my recollection. It was right downtown, and we did the—the phone bank was done upstairs, and I would go there every night. I didn't do the phone bank.

INTERVIEWER: What were you doing for a job at this time?

RICHARD MAULSBY: I was sort of a full-time gay person at that time. Ivanhoe and I joke about this. He said, "Richard, you're a professional homosexual."

[Laughter.]

RICHARD MAULSBY: It was my politics. It was my sex life. When I was working, I had created this entertainment magazine called "Out," *Out* magazine.

INTERVIEWER: The national one now?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Well, I don't know what it is now. At that time, it was sort of—you know, it was a complement more—

INTERVIEWER: There is an *Out* magazine now.

RICHARD MAULSBY: There is. There is, yeah. But this was to be—this was primarily just focused on entertainment stuff, and it was like the *Blade*, distributed free. And the person who was behind it, who funded it, and who paid my salary and basically said, "Richard, you go work for Marion was Bill Oates, who owned the Follies and La Cage [The Follies was a gay porn theater featuring nude male dancers; La Cage was a bar that featured nude male dancers] and what really always got it in terms of what we should do as a community—and he was treasurer of the Democratic Club. He gave money. Bill had a lot of cash going around, you know.

INTERVIEWER: He's in a very cashy business.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Ask Jim Graham [Director of Whitman Walker Clinic, a health clinic for gay men which later was in forefront of battle to contain AIDS in DC. Graham was later elected to three terms on the DC City Council representing Ward 1.]

RICHARD MAULSBY: Right. God, that's the most ridiculous thing. That's an aside.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, I know. All right. So you did the phone bank. Well, you know, there was no Internet. There was no Twitter. There was no none of that. There were payphones, and what was it physically? Was it just a bunch of—did you have about 10 phones?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah. There were, I think—

INTERVIEWER: Maybe a dozen at best?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah, probably so. Yeah, yeah. And, of course, the best time to call people was at night, and that's when they really needed folks.

INTERVIEWER: Who wrote your script of what to say?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Oh, the campaign did. The campaign did.

INTERVIEWER: Campaign.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah. I don't know who coordinated the phone bank overall for the campaign. I mean, I provided the volunteers and made sure it was staffed.

INTERVIEWER: You had the staff.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah, yeah. And that is really the most important thing. So here's what we did, okay? We got the gay money. We raised money elsewhere. We provided volunteers. We wanted a very effective service, and also, most importantly, at the end of the day, we helped identify where our voters were. We registered people to vote, and we go them out on election day.

INTERVIEWER: Well, how did you identify them? Do you mean just by asking on the phones? You got their names, or you just went around and just talked to people? When you say you identified the vote, how did you identify the vote?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Well, really it was by the precincts in Dupont Circle.

INTERVIEWER: You'd get a list of voters registered in Dupont Circle and just go to precincts?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah. And we did voter registration in all the bars. We did voter registration at Gay Pride Day, and we assumed these people that are registering, they were going to—so we did ads in the *Blade*. We did other kinds of flyers and things.

INTERVIEWER: Did you use "To take a stand"? That's the phrase that Barry used in his campaign.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Wasn't that '82?

INTERVIEWER: No.

RICHARD MAULSBY: That was '82 campaign.

INTERVIEWER: I thought "Take a stand" was his first one.

RICHARD MAULSBY: I don't know.

INTERVIEWER: Because that sounds like a first one. I could check in a moment. But did you get campaign money from the organization, or did you raise your own money?

RICHARD MAULSBY: No, we did it ourselves. We did it ourselves.

INTERVIEWER: That would be like an in-kind contribution today?

RICHARD MAULSBY: I'm sure it would be. It was terribly illegal.

INTERVIEWER: God knows how many laws you guys broke.

RICHARD MAULSBY: God. Lord.

[Laughter.]

INTERVIEWER: Is there a statutes of limitations?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Is there? I hope so. Hopefully, somebody is listening to this in 2050 and—

INTERVIEWER: But you felt like you were part of something.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Oh, God, yeah. And, you know, to this day, I have relationships that started there and that are very important to me and—

INTERVIEWER: Anita Bonds, for example.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Anita Bonds, Sybil Hammond [1978 campaign scheduler], Pat Seldon [Barry's Executive Assistant], and, you know, it was just interesting because I think—and, again, Ivanhoe said this to me once. He said, "Well, you know, Richard, a lot of these people have never really been around an openly gay person before, and, you know, you're sort of nonthreatening." I didn't spend that much time around African Americans, you know, and especially African Americans who were middle class, upper middle class. So it was just a really unique experience.

INTERVIEWER: A cultural experience at most.

RICHARD MAULSBY: It was. Yeah, yeah. It did—you know, that campaign had a great personal impact on me, obviously. I had two wonderful jobs in the Barry administration, first person to run the film office and then bring in cable television, such that it is, to the District of Columbia, but personally made friends that have been friends for life.

Then we did accomplish through that campaign what we wanted to do in terms of establishing the gay community as a political force in the city, and, of course, today when it's no big deal, but, you know—and then, as a result of that, that's when people started coming to us.

I'm not sure when it was that Arrington Dixon first dropped his bill to have gay marriage.

INTERVIEWER: Right. It was like '70—it was actually pretty early.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah, yeah. And, you know, Dave Clark [Councilmember from Ward 1] who eventually is a person who saw the rewrite of the criminal code through—

INTERVIEWER: The sodomy bill.

RICHARD MAULSBY: —which included that. The Title 34 amendment to the Human Rights Act.

INTERVIEWER: Title 34 to the Human Rights.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Right, right. It included sexual orientation.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

RICHARD MAULSBY: And the smart thing they did, they made sure it could not be subject to repeal, recall, whatever.

INTERVIEWER: Right. That's when the same-sex marriage, many years later, could not be put on the ballot—

RICHARD MAULSBY: Right.

INTERVIEWER: —because you can't vote on someone's civil rights.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah, yeah. So, you know, we were very fortunate, I think, to be present at the creation of political—a modern-day political system in the District of Columbia where voters and citizens had their first say in the affairs of our city. So to be there at the very beginning and to be part of that exciting, winning coalition—and, frankly, I did not—even going into Election Day—I guess the only thing, I thought—I've always felt, well, we certainly played a very important role. The other, you cannot overstate the *Washington Post* endorsement—

INTERVIEWER: I was going to get to that in just a moment.

RICHARD MAULSBY: —more than once or twice, and that's when I thought, well, hey, maybe this is going to happen. And then that whole business—

INTERVIEWER: The endorsement of several. I think it was several.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: There were three or four endorsements.

RICHARD MAULSBY: And the last one, they said, "A vote for Marion Barry is a vote for Marion Barry," this thing which Polly Shackleton [Ward 3 City Councilmember] had got into, that by voting for Marion, you're going to make sure that Walter Washington—

INTERVIEWER: Right.

RICHARD MAULSBY: And that's one of my most vivid memories when that whole thing came down, a hot August day and Marion having a press conference there on the sidewalk. And Mary Lampson [1978 campaign staff member and close friend of Polly Shackleton], who she and Polly, we still talk—were just livid what Polly had done. She was just shaking with rage, you know.

INTERVIEWER: You would think that for those who knew Polly Shackleton, who comes from the Eleanor Roosevelt era—

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: —actually didn't support Barry. We would have thought she would have.

RICHARD MAULSBY: I know, really. And so many people close to her had done that.

INTERVIEWER: That campaign was very tight. Even the election results were very narrow—

RICHARD MAULSBY: Oh, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: —when a third vote for each of the three candidates.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Oh, yeah, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: It was not any—not any by chance or anything. It was a squeaker.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Absolutely.

INTERVIEWER: It was an absolute squeaker.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Right.

INTERVIEWER: And the election, I think it was September 14th. I can't remember the actual day.

RICHARD MAULSBY: I believe it was, yeah, or September 9th. It was the first Tuesday after Labor Day. [It was Tuesday, September 12, 1978]

INTERVIEWER: Right. In that, you said going into the election, you didn't know whether he would win or not, but you were very encouraged by the *Post* editorial.

RICHARD MAULSBY: *Post*, yeah. I felt a sense with that and the way the whole thing had come down, where they're trying to make a deal to get Marion out of the race.

INTERVIEWER: Did you have during that period of time from the early summer to the election itself—were you part of groups where the campaign pulled together the various leaders of different factions, not just the inner circle, and talk, or was it always just kind of filter out to people?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah, we did. Yeah, especially close to the election, the whole Get Out the Vote thing. There was a big meeting just before the election at Ann and Gilbert Kinney's home in Georgetown [Ann was a fundraiser who staffed the 1978 campaign Finance Committee], where we all were there. I think it was like the weekend before the election or something like that. So, yeah, there were a couple of Get Out the Vote kind of things.

INTERVIEWER: Would Ivanhoe have pulled that meeting together?

RICHARD MAULSBY: He would have been involved.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember was there a Get Out the Vote person that you dealt with?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Must have been. I don't—

INTERVIEWER: You don't remember them.

RICHARD MAULSBY: I'm sure there was. Well, but, you know, that's the other thing. It seems to me, this—Marion won, I would say three reasons: one, the *Washington Post* endorsement; the support he got from the gay community; and the fact that the campaign registered new voters. And that was never reflected in any of the polling or anything in registering those new voters, and we played some part in that with what we did in our community.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember how many you registered?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Gosh, no. Hundreds—well—

INTERVIEWER: Hundreds?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah. At the time if you had asked me, we registered 2,000 voters.

INTERVIEWER: Close race like that, a few hundred votes makes a dc.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Oh, it does. Yeah, absolutely. Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely.

INTERVIEWER: Where were you election night?

RICHARD MAULSBY: I was at—we had dinner. Paul Kuntzler, Steve Miller, Richard Lefante and I had dinner at the place where I first had dinner, the first night I was in Washington, which at that time was called the Golden Boeymonger. It had been the Golden Parrot when I had dinner there with Larry Laurent of the *Post*. Larry Brown, the running back, had a restaurant there, and then it was the Golden Boeymonger. So we had dinner there. Then we went to the Harambee House, and I had a transistor radio with a speaker thing in it.

INTERVIEWER: What's a transistor radio?

RICHARD MAULSBY: I know. I know. It's kind of like that, you know.

So we're getting the returns, and then Marion came down. It was really very exciting.

INTERVIEWER: We're coming up in just a couple years on the 40th anniversary of the 1978 race. In 3 years, it will be 40 years since that campaign.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Right. Hopefully, we'll have this oral history project done by then.

[Laughter.]

RICHARD MAULSBY: But let me tell you the last thing that's important in terms of—well, this is about the Barry campaign in 1978, but it's important. It was a single moment for the gay community and led to our successes in not only the political, but commercially. If you go back and you look at the *Washington Blade*, it was after that election. We showed that we had clout. The advertising in the *Blade* really picked up. It became clear that there was a targeted community, and who is the key to our getting credit for this? Two people, Paul Kuntzler and Milton Coleman.

We took Milton Coleman to lunch.

INTERVIEWER: Milton Coleman was a reporter for the *Washington Post*—

RICHARD MAULSBY: *Washington Post*, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: —who covered the campaign.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Covered the campaign, yes, indeed.

INTERVIEWER: He's now the ombudsman for the *Post*.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yes. And I understand he's going to be interviewed for this project.

INTERVIEWER: Yes.

RICHARD MAULSBY: We took him to lunch at the Eagle.

INTERVIEWER: When?

RICHARD MAULSBY: In like—I want to say it was November.

INTERVIEWER: Oh, after the primary?

RICHARD MAULSBY: After the primary.

INTERVIEWER: Okay.

RICHARD MAULSBY: And Paul, who always did this—I mean, Paul was so compulsive, so—he works on things like this for hours—did an analysis of everything of the election results and so on. And he came up with this map which showed that in those areas of the city where there was—we knew there was a concentration of gay voters, Marion carried those precincts by larger margins than in other areas. That map appeared on the front page of the *Washington Post*. I believe it was below the fold, but that story about our community and the influence. I mean, to me, that was sort of the cherry on the sundae, if you will, was that what validated what we in fact intuitively felt was the case. And, I mean, you know, we obviously don't have the sophisticated kind of tools we would have today to do that kind of analysis, but, I mean, Paul is very—was very brilliant in that regard in terms of seeing that bigger picture and how you really connect the dots and help show how this was as important as it was, so yeah.

INTERVIEWER: I asked you earlier about Barry and whether there was drug use around him. You mentioned marijuana, maybe that. There was this constant stream of back underground talk that Barry was misbehaving, that he was brilliant. When he was in office and people would

say even when he was clearly having some kind of drug issue, he would sit at a table. He would still be smarter and clearer-headed than you were—

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yep.

INTERVIEWER: —amazingly so. In the campaign—and I worked once for a Member of Congress in 1974 who had a drinking problem, and he would, like, disappear for 2 days. And we would just hope nobody would ask us where he was.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Right.

INTERVIEWER: Was there any sense that as inspiring and in some ways brilliant that Barry was politically that his personal life was always a worry—was a worry, either occasionally or all the time, a constant threat, or was it there enough? Did you ever sense it? Because it came up famous later.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Our focus here is the '78 campaign.

INTERVIEWER: Right. I'm talking about that campaign.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Certainly not in the '78 campaign. I'm aware of nothing like that. He was always sharp and everything.

INTERVIEWER: Not the night owl that he became.

RICHARD MAULSBY: No. And, you know, he was just married. I mean, he was, I'm sure, on his best behavior at that time, but nothing like that in '78. Now, by the time you get to '87, you get the stories, and I certainly had my own experiences with him. I mean, I used to do a cable television show with him every week, trying to, you know—

INTERVIEWER: Get him to come back for a moment.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Well, yeah.

[Laughter.]

RICHARD MAULSBY: He'd say, "Well, did you hear we have this problem?" eyes closed. So, no, not in '78.

Again, things went off track after '82 and starting in—

INTERVIEWER: That night at the Harambee House, was on Georgia Avenue near Howard University?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yes. Yeah, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: There was a junkyard across the street. You probably don't remember that.

RICHARD MAULSBY: I can't say I do.

INTERVIEWER: It's not a junkyard anymore. But what was the mood there? You said you went to dinner first when you got there. Whenever someone wins, everyone kind of converges upon—was there a moment when you got there, did he come out behind the stage? Did he walk in the crowd?

RICHARD MAULSBY: There was a stage. They came down. At some point, I think around ten o'clock in the evening, they came down, he and Effi. And, you know, I don't think at that point,

there was a—but it was clearly where the trends were looking very, very good for him. And it was just, you know, a great celebration, all the things you experience.

INTERVIEWER: Was there a thing where people—leaders were called up on stage, or were they just all Barry and Effi and Ivanhoe?

RICHARD MAULSBY: It was just Barry and Effi. Yeah, I don't remember anybody—

INTERVIEWER: You didn't go up on the stage and take a bow or anything like that?

RICHARD MAULSBY: No. No, no, no.

INTERVIEWER: Did he call out the gay people who supported him or anybody else?

RICHARD MAULSBY: No. No.

INTERVIEWER: The ministers, the African American ministers were pretty much with Walter Washington and Sterling Tucker.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Sterling Tucker. Who did we have? We had—what's his face?

INTERVIEWER: David.

RICHARD MAULSBY: David Eaton [Barry's pastor at the Unitarian Church and a member of the DC School Board]

INTERVIEWER: David Eaton.

RICHARD MAULSBY: That's when Marion was a Unitarian.

INTERVIEWER: Yes.

RICHARD MAULSBY: No, I don't—no, no.

INTERVIEWER: I think Marion was a Seventh Day agnostic.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Seventh Day agnostic.

[Laughter.]

INTERVIEWER: So the election night comes. You're excited. Did you go out and celebrate?

RICHARD MAULSBY: No. I wouldn't say—

INTERVIEWER: You were exhausted; you go home.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah, we went home. I had to work the next day. By then, I had a normal job.

INTERVIEWER: So, into the fall, what happened in the transition. What was interesting?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Well, the first thing that happened was the first—Gertrude Stein meeting the first—I think it was the first Monday every month. So the first meeting after the election would have been in October, and Betty King came and on behalf of the campaign thanked us all and everything. The meeting was in the Fraternity House [a gay bar and restaurant] there on P Street. We sort of moved around. We always found a place where we could have drinks, you know.

And it was kind of low key. Then what happened? Oh, yeah. During the transition, Ivanhoe called me to come and meet with him, and he said, "You know, I'm thinking that we should

have you or Paul in the administration." And I said, "Well, I don't think Paul is really interested in that. He certainly would like to be on the state committee, but as it happens, I felt for some time based on my experience that the city should have a film office to help cut all the red tape and so on and so forth. I'd be very interested in doing that." I said I was not interested in being liaison with the gay community. In fact, Marion never had a liaison with the gay community.

But that started the discussion that ended up in the following September of Marion by executive order, and he had introduced the bill in the Council. It hadn't gone anywhere, but then by executive order, he created the film office. And so that's—

INTERVIEWER: Which still exists.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Which still exists, part of the Office of Business and Economic Development. It just started with me.

And then I got involved. They got Ivanhoe- , and Elijah [Rogers the City Administrator during Barry's first term] wanted me to take the lead in terms of the whole cable television thing and trying to get that done. So that evolved in my becoming head of the cable office in 1984. So I do have the distinction.

INTERVIEWER: And [?] in the Council.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Oh, God, that was—oh, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: But then Bob Johnson—that's how Bob Johnson made money—

RICHARD MAULSBY: Bob Johnson.

INTERVIEWER: —who is now a wealthy guy because—

RICHARD MAULSBY: Well, Bob really made his money on BET [Black Entertainment Television], and that was a cash cow for him, you know, renting out the satellite.

INTERVIEWER: Yes, which Mayor Barry, the city grant of \$800,000 helped establish his headquarters.

RICHARD MAULSBY: That headquarters, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: And then he turned his back on Barry, but that's a different story.

RICHARD MAULSBY: That's a different story, yeah. But, you know, it's a funny thing about Bob. I always sort of admired him in a way. He was a hustler and a businessman, and we had a good rapport. We spent a lot of time negotiating, and he was always very helpful. He was concerned about what was going to happen to me when Kelly won. {Sharon Pratt Kelly elected Mayor in 1990} There was some talk of my going to work for District Cablevision, but he set up a meeting for me at the Democratic State Committee to run their studio. But then I got another job offer. So I didn't do that.

But, I mean, he was always—yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Let me wrap up on the election. You came to town. Like many people, you just happened to come to town. You were interested in politics and just the atmosphere of politics this city has. You evolved into the gay activism, get involved with this dynamic new leader. He gets to be mayor after a very tight campaign. Easily—had the *Post* endorsed someone else, it

could have easily turned the table. It was so close. Without your activism, without the *Post* endorsement, without the voter registration—you look back. Everyone knows the story of how Barry fell and got up and fell and the tough times he had. What is your summary judgment about was it worth it?

RICHARD MAULSBY: From my perspective?

INTERVIEWER: Mm-hmm.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Oh, God, yes. No, I think it's the most—if I look back on my life, I think it's the most significant professional political experience I've ever had, and it's led to a lot of very good things. I mean, you know—

INTERVIEWER: You said you forgave him on the issue of same-sex marriage when he was arrested that night in January 18th, 1990.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Right.

INTERVIEWER: You had already, of course, moved on in your professional career, hadn't you? Where were you then?

RICHARD MAULSBY: No, no, no.

INTERVIEWER: No, you were still—that's right.

RICHARD MAULSBY: I was still head of the cable office.

INTERVIEWER: That was later.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Okay.

RICHARD MAULSBY: And I had the awful experience of riding up in the elevator at the Reeves Center. For whatever reason, the only people in the elevator at the time—we had this special cabinet meeting, and it was—whenever I arrived, it must have been late. So going up in the elevator, me, Marion, Effi, and Sterling Tucker, of all people, and I just remember Marion saying, "Oh, it's tough. It's tough. It's tough."

You know something? I was a pretty hardcore defender of him. I remember at one point Kwame Holman came to interview me on the [Public Broadcasting System] News Hour, and he tried to get me to say—"Well, you know, is he a tragic figure?" or whatever. Listen, I just—I was the ultimate loyalist.

INTERVIEWER: I thought he was a Greek tragic figure once when he was in trouble and he said, "I'm not a Greek tragedy because in those the hero dies, and I'm not dying," which is pretty good.

RICHARD MAULSBY: "I'm not dying," right.

INTERVIEWER: All right. But '78—and your campaign, have you endorsed anyone else—not endorsed. Have you fallen behind and gotten to support anyone else in your life since then like that, or is it like they always say, the first time is the best time? You get more jaded with things that happen. You get more strategic, whatever. Is there any—

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah. I guess certainly not locally. I mean, I tell you I had just been—I mean, Charlene Jarvis [Councilwoman from Ward 4], her—[Councilwoman] Linda Cropp was the last person, and, I mean, [Mayor Sharon Pratt] Kelly got me all involved in her reelection campaign, you know, and that was a total disaster.

INTERVIEWER: Right. She got 13 percent of the vote.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah. I mean, that's incredible, an incumbent.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

RICHARD MAULSBY: But, no, certainly not—and locally, we had the big disappointment, the Jim Zias campaign and—[Jim was prominent gay activist who ran for the Ward 2 City Council seat in a special election in 1991].

INTERVIEWER: For World War II.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: All right. I thought of an important question, and I can't believe—I was going to ask you second this question. What was Washington like in 1978 compared to what Washington is like in 2015 in terms of places and things and people and culture? Just how much has it changed? What was it like then compared to what it is now? The African American population is under 50 percent. What is the local feel as best you can tell? What was it like in '78?

RICHARD MAULSBY: You know, it's interesting. I think that it's not a lot like that different than when I first came in '69 and '70, and I was really taken aback because I guess I had this image of Washington as the Nation's Capital. But it could be little things like, you know, you couldn't stand up and have a drink in a bar. Well, by '78, that had changed, but the hours were very—it was not—did not have the level of sophistication. You didn't have the amount of culture, it seemed to me, no way in terms of now. Obviously, where the campaign headquarters was located, that whole strip was—really had come in disrepair, and, of course, now it's very vibrant and everything.

INTERVIEWER: Sleepy Southern town.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Sleepy Southern town still, I think, in a lot of ways. And the really—you know, yes, we had had our first elected mayor, but things really had not changed because he had been mayor for such a long time. We had this sluggish bureaucracy. It was a holdover from all those years. Congress ran the city, and you had these sort of separate little entities and things, and it was kind of like the Balkan states or something. It was all this turf and stuff. But, no, it was not nowhere near, you know—you didn't have the sense of the internationalist—international flavor of the city, didn't have a baseball team, had no prospect.

INTERVIEWER: By then, you had committed to being—living in Washington?

RICHARD MAULSBY: Oh, yeah. Yeah. No, I had, you know—had developed many relationships, and obviously, I've spent the most part of my life here. Yeah. No, I think it's—I think it's a great city. And I do believe that that election in '78—I mean, we are a different city today because of it, because of that kind of dynamic leadership that Marion brought to the city and the development that took place. So, no, I think I was part of—a small part of something

that really did make a difference in the long run. People will someday really come to see that when the history is written. Marion will always be what he was, a good man who had a lot of faults and weaknesses and things, but he was incorrigible. He was hard not to like, I thought, hard not to like. There's a little bit of Bill Clinton in him.

INTERVIEWER: I was going to say they're brothers.

RICHARD MAULSBY: Yeah, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: They're really brothers.

RICHARD MAULSBY: You know, there's this rascal kind of thing there, but they never give up trying. They never—Marion never gave up going out to Ward 3 and trying to reason with these people. It's like—you know Clinton was the same way. He kept trying to be friendly and reasonable with people. No, he [Marion] was—at the end of the day, he was a good man, as far as I'm concerned, and I think that I benefitted greatly personally. Our community, the gay and lesbian community in Washington benefitted greatly from his leadership. I collect a very nice federal pension these days.

INTERVIEWER: Okay.

RICHARD MAULSBY: And it started because in '78, we were part of the federal system.

INTERVIEWER: That's right. All right, good. I think I pretty much got it. Don't hit the Erase button.

RICHARD MAULSBY: So it's at 55 minutes now.

INTERVIEWER: And it was 20 minutes—

RICHARD MAULSBY: We had 20 minutes, so yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Seventy minute?

RICHARD MAULSBY: I'm going to hit Stop.

INTERVIEWER: Okay.